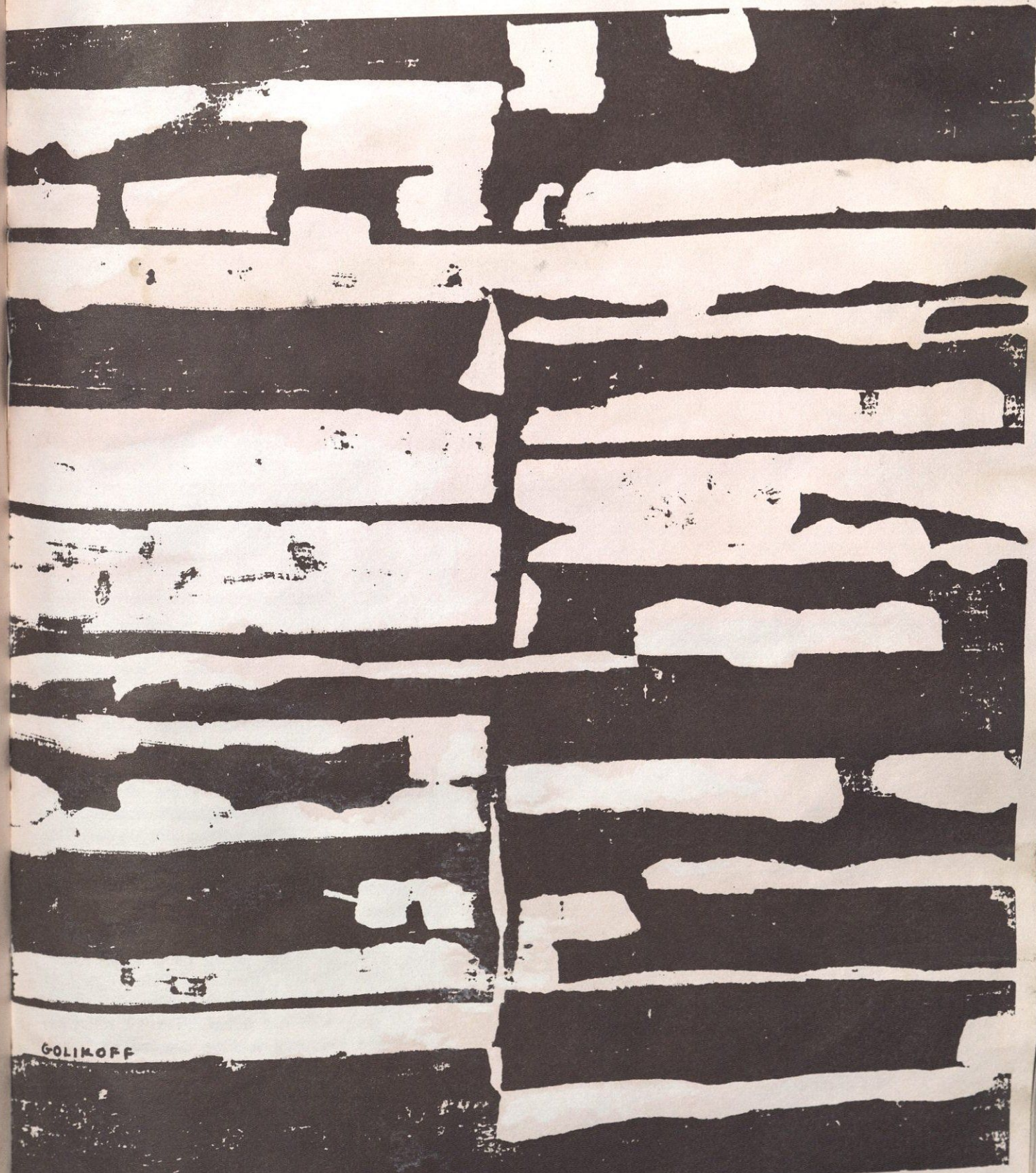


The HARPSIGORD



GOLIKOFF

HARPSICHORD

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GO FOR BAROQUE

by *Hal Haney*



One thing we have at The Harpsichord office which is in great supply, is enthusiasm . . . and sometimes our enthusiasm gets us into trouble. That's what happened on page 7 of the last issue. We became so enthusiastic about the excellent picture sent to us by Hugh Boyle, we enlarged it to the point that the bridges and hitch pin rails were pushed right off the page, yet the caption was not changed. Items numbered (18), (19), (20) and (21) should be crossed out since these are not in the picture. Our sincerest apologies to the many readers who hunted for these items and especially to Mr. Boyle who had nothing to do with this error.

Frank H. Taylor, Sub-dean of the San Francisco Chapter of the *American Guild of Organists*, and valued member of I.H.S. has come up with a grand method of promoting the Harpsichord Society and helping it grow. At the annual fall reception of AGO, San Francisco, held in a large and elegant room of the San Francisco College of Women on Lone Mountain, he set up a large table on which he placed his personal file of "harpsichordiana" and a generous stack of form letters publicizing the Society. He had a large IHS logo on an easel which was borrowed from his church. (He had made it originally to cover an unwanted round window when he directed a performance of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* during daylight hours.) He also distributed information on kits, production instruments, etc. Frank sent

four beautiful full-color photographs of the reception and the harpsichord table. Unfortunately we can't print color (and black and white conversions are very expensive and not too successful) so we are not able to reproduce these here. If you belong to a group interested in music, perhaps you could use the Frank Taylor Plan to help the Society grow. We'll be happy to send sample copies of Frank's form letter which you can adapt to your own group, plus a supply of membership kits which your friends can use to join the Society.

The Art Department has temporarily moved into the Editorial Department because of the unusual nerve-numbing cold which slipped into Denver in January. The temperature at Ed's art table was only 27° one day. The little wall heater we have just doesn't put out enough BTU's to chase away the chill. Even the water dish for Andy, the studio cat, was frozen solid. The Editorial Department fares a little better since it gets the bright morning sun. But even so, we're getting used to working in our coats and hats until our usual mild weather returns. One blustery night we had to go under the building with flash lights and a blow torch to thaw the frozen water pipes . . . but that is another story.

We're particularly proud of the picture-spread on Zuckermann in this issue. We've been waiting some time to print it. The use of the words "harpsichord factory" in the title of the article is, of course, in jest. There is no such thing in America. Incidentally, Zuckermann no longer builds harpsichords for sale. His total output is now in the form of kits.

The candid photo below, shows Nancy Fireman of Palo Alto, Calif. who flew in to celebrate Christmas with her parents. Two of those precious days were donated to help us type up this issue! Nancy graduated from high school in New Delhi, India, continued her education at the Universities of Arizona and Florence,

(Continued on next page)

February March April 1970

SYMPATHETIC VIBRATIONS

LOOKING BACK

by Wallace Zuckermann

It's the end of the year, I'm living in England at the moment, and my book is out. Writing it was a little like finishing an instrument, with the customer (in this case the publisher) breathing down your neck.



I think I've discovered the best way to write a book: do the research, the writing and the rest of it, and then never let it be published. That way you learn an immense amount without incurring anyone's wrath! And learn I did, so that I want to redesign all my instruments. My publisher got so interested in the problems of design, that he sold his kit-built instrument and started a new one with bentside, thinned soundboard, 6½ inches more length, thinner ribs and lighter case. I'll report the results in a later column.

As for incurring people's wraths, I'm afraid some of the makers are unhappy, and who can blame them? They opened their doors to me and showed me their whole output, only to find that they have been "stabbed in the back" or at least slighted. Usually, they would pick up the book and turn to the section on themselves, and then cast it away in disgust, not realizing that the entire style is light, chatty, informal, and ironic, rather than scholarly, serious, ponderous, and neutral. As one maker writing about

the others I was in an impossible position and decided that if I treated the whole subject lightly, nobody would come out either terribly well or very badly. All the makers, almost without exception, are charming people, and if I repeated an amusing anecdote about them or described their work in less than the most flattering terms, I'm sure they'll survive it. They might even sell a few harpsichords!

One of the makers, who was absolutely livid at first, was later moved to write the following letter: "The discussion of the Edsel calliope with the rainbow effect and chrome wrap-around was a wry turn, what with its having been designed from the outside in; but what really grabbed me, I didn't know that McNamara's first sousaphonist's palate couldn't distinguish between endive and escarole. This corroborates my belief, also, that if the mind is too weak to distinguish taste, all senses must be impaired . . . Sort of as an aside, I really enjoyed your phrase 'she done brung it from Tuscaloosa to Tegucigalpa' which is such a helpful tuning aid."

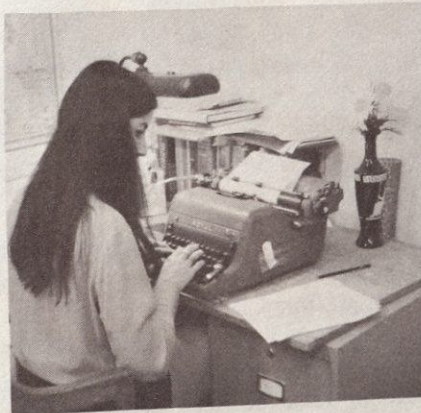
Wallace Zuckermann

GO FOR BAROQUE

(Continued from page 2)

Italy, and is now a lab technician with Syntex. Thank you very much, Nancy, you brightened our office and helped us meet a pressing deadline.

HLH



THE COVER

Based on the harpsichord keyboard as motif, Ed Golikoff cut into a linoleum block for this issue's cover. It suggests the play of light on the keys rather than the intrinsic color due to the chemistry of the materials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The International Society of Harpsichord Builders is proud to give special recognition to the following Contributing Members whose interest and generosity aid materially in the development and preservation of the instruments and music of the baroque period and assists in furthering the various projects and programs of the Society.

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Racine, Wisconsin

A PICTORIAL VISIT TO A HARPSICHORD FACTORY

A few years back (1967) when Ed Golikoff and I decided to try our hand at publishing a harpsichord magazine, I made a list of about 30 articles from which we could get ideas for inclusion in our first issue. Ed then selected, from my list, the articles which could be attractively illustrated. One of the articles selected was "Pictorial Visit to a Harpsichord Factory." Of course it was done somewhat tongue-in-cheek since we knew of no "factory" at that time. But this was for a dummy issue so it really didn't matter. Ed created an impressive pictorial layout showing a huge three block long factory complete with saw-tooth roof and half a dozen giant smoke stacks belching clouds of black smoke. His drawings of the interior showed endless rows of workmen bending over complex machines. One drawing illustrated a huge 3-story hydraulic press big enough to stamp out a bulldozer in one operation.

We still have that first dummy issue, but of course the art work was never used. Ever since that first issue we have been trying to do a story on a "harpsichord factory". The first "factory" I visited was Zuckermann Harpsichords at 155 Christopher Street in New York, and while they are possibly responsible for more harpsichords than any other modern company in the world, there is not a smoke stack in sight.

Christopher Street is a colorful street which was old back when sheep and cows were still grazing in Central Park. It is in the heart of Greenwich Village which was actually a separate village during the colonial period. Later, it became an exclusive residential part of New York. Around 1910 the Village gained renown as the home and workshop of non conformist artists, writers and theater people. Barns and quaint old houses along the twisting streets were converted into restaurants, shops and night clubs. This atmosphere still prevails although not too many years ago, the Village

was about the least expensive place to live, the opposite is rapidly becoming true. New sky-high apartment buildings are dotting the city-scape boasting sky-high rent. Rolls Royces and Lincoln Continentals are commonplace in front of some of these buildings.

My visit started with a ride on the subway for I had learned long ago that one only takes a cab in New York if you have plenty of time to spare. It is absolutely true that walking will get you across town faster than a cab during the rush hours. Within minutes I was climbing up to the surface at the stop marked Sheridan Square.

Zuckermann's headquarters is located in a three-story building just a step from Sheridan Square. The street is lined with a potpourri of businesses and apartment buildings. On the same street are "Instant Antiques" where surprisingly realistic old things are produced as a daily business. Near by is "The Leather Man" where you can have any article of clothing custom tailored of leather. The famous Theater De Lys is located here where "Dames at Sea" has been packing them in for the past year. Just next to number 115 is a currently empty store bearing the sign "The Green Hornet", all that is left of an off-beat night club which didn't make it.

I almost missed Zuckermann's door. It is quite unpretentious and marked only by a very small sign which read Zuckermann Harpsichords.

Upon entering the building I found a small, dark room with an elevator and a stair. Nothing more. Except for a hand lettered sign on the elevator door which explained a rather complex schedule of operating hours so I decided to walk up.

The stairs were steep, dark and a little spooky. When I got to the top floor, I found a locked metal door and next to it a civil defense shelter sign with the arrow pointing up! Under it someone had scrawled, "we

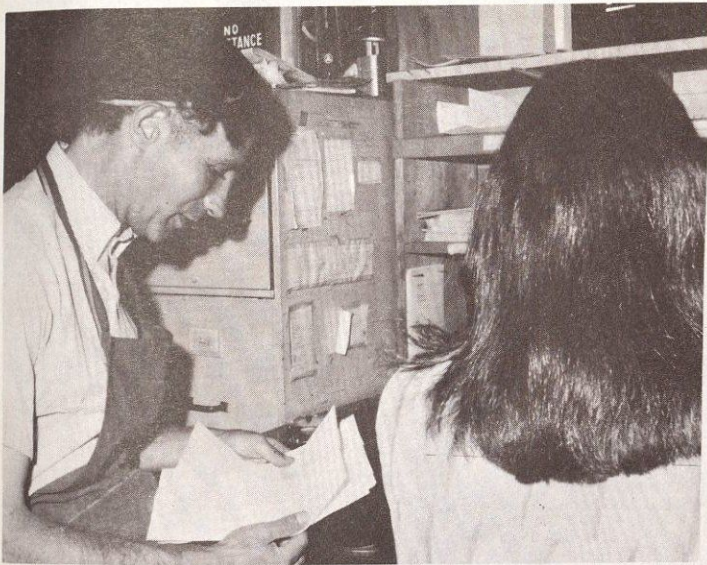
don't believe in signs." I pushed a button and heard a loud bell ring somewhere inside. Soon the door was unbolted and opened by a very attractive girl with large Loretta Young eyes and hair that would make a movie star envious. This was Sharon Rule, everyman's idea of a perfect secretary. On subsequent visits I discovered that Sharon's attractiveness was just one of her many assets. Her efficiency is a joy to behold. She can locate a letter, a photograph, a drawing or recall a name with computer-like speed and accuracy. She recognized by name almost everyone who has purchased a kit from Zuckermann and is able to answer any question about the mechanics of Zuckermann's instruments. She is remarkable, to whom much credit must go for the successful operation of Zuckermann Harpsichords. Unlike most attractive women, she abhors being photographed yet she kindly consented to let me photograph her for this article.

I then met Wallace Zuckermann and he took me on a tour of his facility. After three years of being on a back burner, the article "Pictorial Visit to a Harpsichord Factory" finally is published.

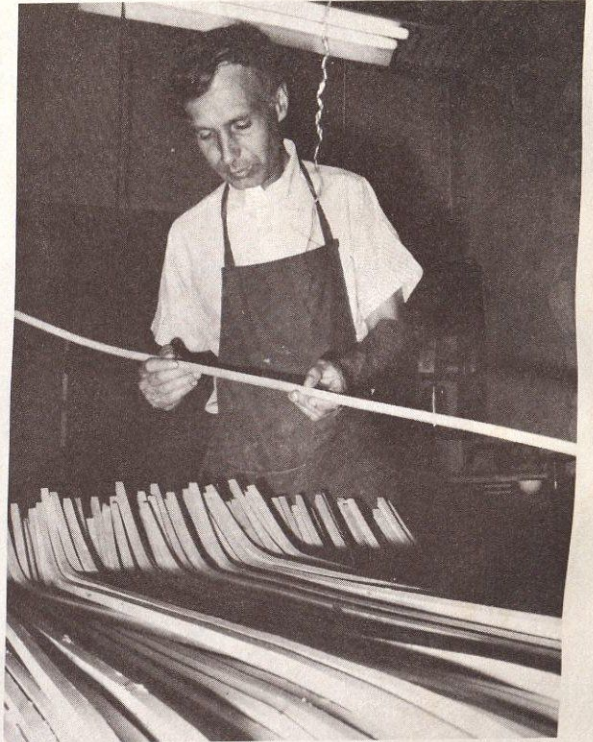
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Sharon Rule takes a "music break" at a demonstration harpsichord in the reception area.



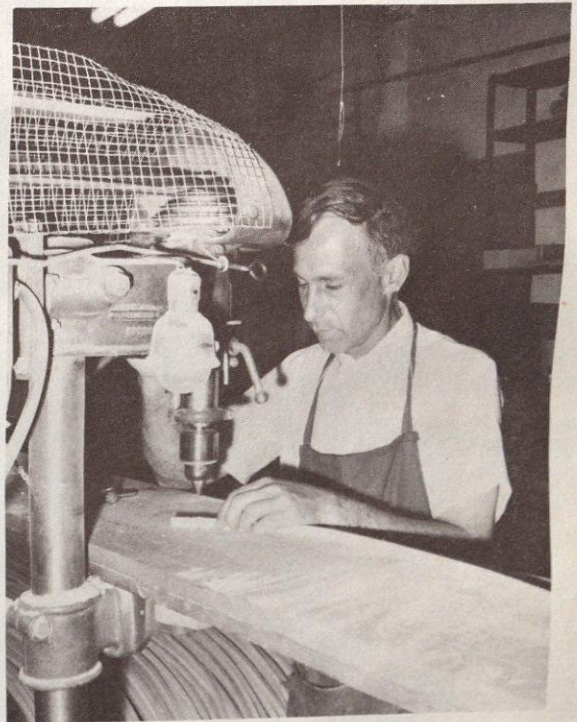
A daily occurrence is correspondence time when Wallace Zuckermann and Sharon answer the many letters which come to the office from all parts of the world.



A bridge is examined for possible flaws before it is passed on to the drilling operation.



A demonstration instrument receives a moment of attention. This particular harpsichord is played day in and day out by curiosity seekers, serious students, talented professionals and all-thumbs beginners.



Zuckermann drills a bridge for a special installation. Under usual circumstances, a jig is used which permits both speed and accuracy.

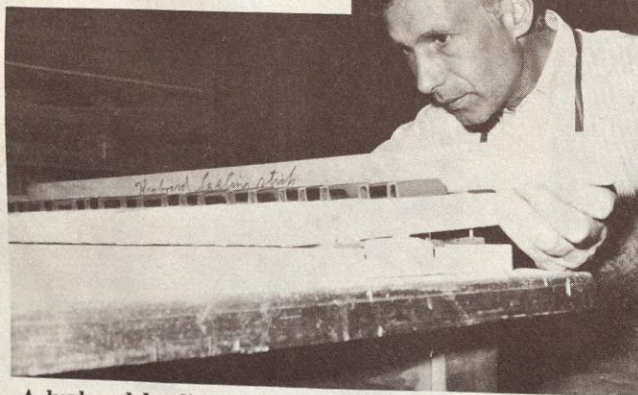
Keyboards anyone? This stack of keyboards is more than 6 feet deep, as high as a man can reach and as wide as a room. These keys will soon be producing music from harpsichords located all over the world.



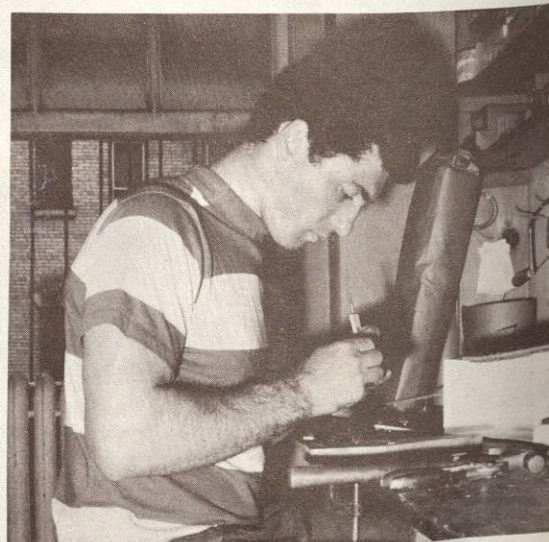
If this man looks familiar, it's because he is Wallace Zuckermann's talented brother, Maurice. He is in charge of the entire kit assembly and shipping department which is located in its own building a few blocks from the office. He is shown here making the familiar music wire coils which accompany every Zuckermann kit. The machine is his own invention and consists of parts from a lathe and sewing machine with bits of ingenuity thrown in.



Every day hundreds of jacks must be inspected for quality. Jack axel pins (the hinge) must be inserted and hammered into place by hand.



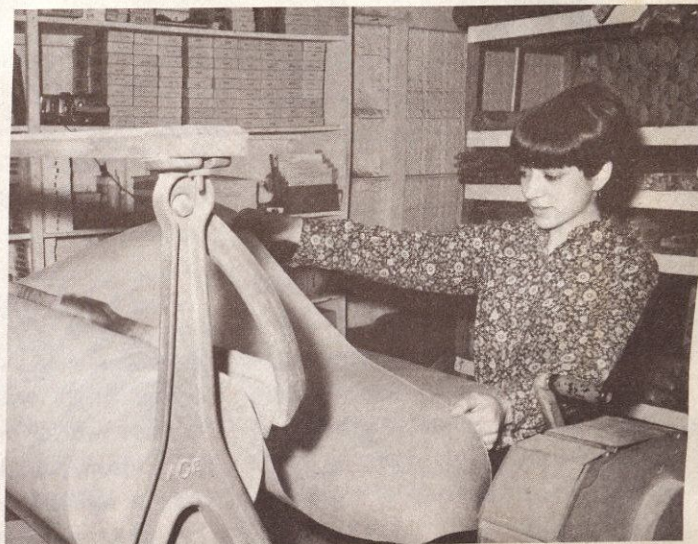
A keyboard leveling stick is used to level the keyboard. This one is marked to keep it from being lost with other lumber, but any straight piece of wood or light metal will do.



An employee removes leather plectra and inserts Delrin for a non-builder customer. Notice the apron across the lap. This is a good habit to get into when working with jacks and plectra. Many screws, springs and felts have been lost for the want of a safe place to fall.



The wrapping department sees that all parts are carefully protected for shipment. In the background are boxes of jacks, stringing wire, tubes of blueprints and other parts which leave the Zuckermann shop daily.

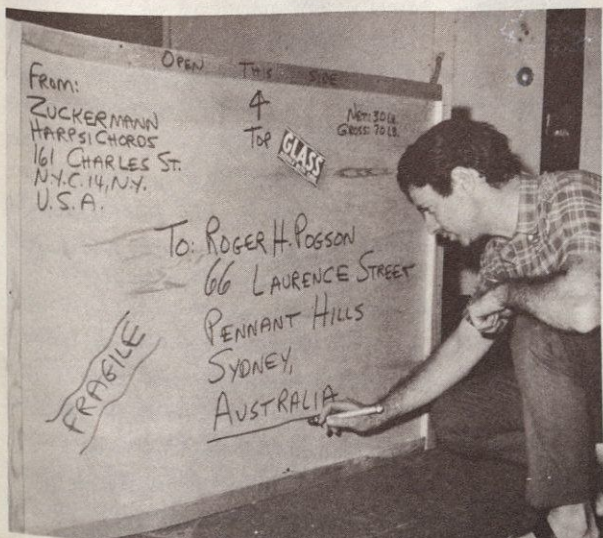


⌂ Zuckermann at his voicing bench. Here is an ideal combination of storage, working area and light which helps make voicing accurate and easy. The stand is made of metal upon which is fastened an open wooden box for holding all voicing tools. The gooseneck lamp illuminates the voicing anvil or block where the plectrum cutting is done. The entire unit can be easily moved from instrument to instrument or be put in a closet to await the next voicing job. This assembly is particularly useful where space might be limited or where a permanent voicing bench is not desired.

Wallace Zuckermann relaxes in the courtyard of his "in town" house tucked away in the heart of Greenwich Village.



Maurice addresses a kit for shipment to Australia. In addition to being a talented artist, Maurice is an accomplished violinist.



BOOKS

THE MODERN HARPSICHORD by Wallace Zuckermann. October House, Inc., 55 West 13th Street, New York 10011. 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. 288 pages, 350 photographs, drawings. Cloth \$15.00.

For many years there have been three books which were required reading for the serious harpsichord buff. Now there are four. Wallace Zuckermann has written a book that will enrage some people, amuse others and broaden the outlook of all. It was brave of him to put down in black and white what he thinks of more than 100 contemporary harpsichord builders and their products. Perhaps someone will come along with a 20th Century volume a la Hubbard or Boalch, but I doubt that anyone will attempt to do what Wallace Zuckermann has done . . . and done well.

The moment this book was published, the Society started receiving telephone calls and letters. These communications either praised or damned the book and often in rather blunt terms. The most often voiced complaint was Zuckermann's section on the Neupert Company and his statement about requirements of tuning Neupert instruments. (page 156). Neupert owners disagreed with him very strongly. One Neupert owner who telephoned (he has owned two Neuperts and is buying a third) said that he enjoyed the book very much but he couldn't agree with the statement on tuning. He mentioned that his instruments required very little attention. Then he suggested that perhaps Zuckermann had often worked with rental Neuperts which take a terrible beating, and that it would be

interesting to see how well a Hubbard, Dowd or other American make could stand up to such constant pounding.

An east coast distributor of Neupert Harpsichords wrote that he believed there was an extensive amount of misinformation included in the Neupert section and offered to write an impartial letter correcting the information which he thought was incorrectly given. This, and other letters, will probably appear in the "Letters" section of *THE HARPSICHORD* in future issues.

John Gotjen of Warren, R. I. wrote "There are few statements in the book I would question. However, on page 75 we read that 'Scarlatti . . . demands two keyboards.' This invites a retort from page 181 of Kirkpatrick's book in which he states that 'unequivocal cases of writing for two manuals are extremely rare in Scarlatti.' It could also be pointed out that Philip Belt's farm, page 86, is not isolated but practically in the middle of his town. But I should hasten not to judge whether Center Conway, New Hampshire, is isolated! And on page 236, I might think twice before hammering a threaded tuning pin *all* the way down to the level of the other pins."

Another member wrote that the book was "highly opinionated" and of course this is true. It makes the book interesting and highly readable. But more about that later.

In my mind, the most glaring error is the lack of an index. This may be more important to me than to many readers, but I always go to the index first which, if well done, will give me an accurate idea of what the book covers and in what depth. When I picked up this book for the first time, I wanted to know the names of the 100 modern builders who were included, but there was no way of discovering this without reading the book from cover to cover, or leafing through

every page. The builders appear in alphabetical order, but their names appear in capital letters only in the body of the text and not at the top of each page. Later, I discovered a complete list of the builders on the back of the dust jacket, but page numbers were not indicated, and dust jackets do have a habit of not lasting for the entire life of the book. I would have also appreciated more detail about some of the obscure builders, but as Zuckermann explains, repeated requests for information were either not answered or answered with incomplete information. Having worked with harpsichord builders a few years myself, I know how difficult it sometimes is to get complete information.

Now let's look at the plus side. This volume covers the history of the instrument in a complete and interesting manner. It includes a chapter on harpsichord maintenance, tuning and repair which could easily be a book by itself. It is more complete and helpful than any publication I have seen to date.

Of course, the bulk of the book (and bless him for this) is the section on contemporary builders. Here Zuckermann has done an outstanding job. The superb photographs and drawings illustrate the text and immediately clarify any questions which a reader might ask. Since the author visited many of the workshops in person (both in the U.S. and abroad) he has gained an insight into the philosophies of the builders and he shares these with his readers. His photographs of builders are informal and add a great deal of charm to the work.

Of inestimable value to builders are the beautiful life-size photographs of jacks used by various professional builders. The front, back and (where important) side of the jack is shown as well as revealing closeups of jack

rails, jack slides, couplerbars, push-pull mechanisms, bridges, nuts, bracing, machine stops, framing, etc.

Most important of all is the text which is written in a light, informal style which moves smoothly from the first to the last pages. Zuckermann's personality and his likes and dislikes lift this book out of the ordinary and make it fun to read. One IHS member wrote "I haven't read anything so entertaining since *Tom Sawyer*." It is refreshing to have a man tell you straight-out what he believes. And this Wallace Zuckermann does. If he does not like an instrument or a builder, he tells you this. He spares no one from the famous to the unknown. However, don't get the idea that this is a book out to condemn builders for the shock value. When Zuckermann comes upon a builder who he believes builds superior instruments, he is just as emphatic about that and tells you why.

Writing about the book, John Gotjen states, "Pleasant to note, one factor that emerges from this book is that there is a 'Boston school' of harpsichord making in the United States. Headed by Frank Hubbard and William Dowd, this group works in the best tradition of the old nationalistic schools to make instruments with reliable actions, light box construction, and superb tone. With both eye and ear the difference between the harpsichords of the Boston school and the best production efforts of England and Germany is painfully clear, to the detriment of the latter group, Zuckermann asserts."

Physically, the book is beautiful. The over-sized pages (same size as this magazine) permit excellent layout and design. The type face is clean and easy to read and even the ink color (a warm black which I suspect has a slight touch of green to it) adds to the overall attractiveness of the work. The

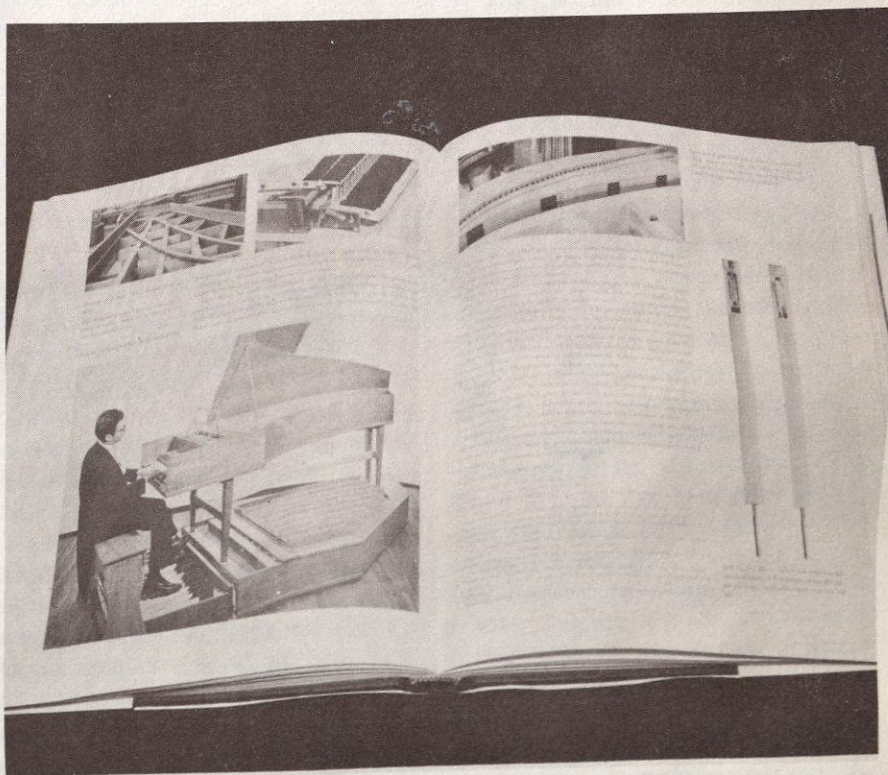
quality of the paper is exceptionally fine with excellent body, weight and finish and yet no disturbing glare. I compliment the publishers for taking the pains and expense of making this book a superior one.

In the preface, Zuckermann admits that writing a book which attacks some harpsichord builders and praises others might put the author in a difficult position. Some readers have written to us suggesting that one builder should not comment on the quality of other builders' products any more than one professional musician should write a book about the work of other professional musicians. We disagree. We believe professionals should be free to express any opinions they have, and Zuckermann makes it very clear that his book is filled with his opin-

ions. He asks the reader to compare him to a theater or music critic. In his words "A critic is entitled to his opinion, backed up by a certain amount of exposure to his medium — radical, unpopular or crotchety though his opinion may be. My own view of the harpsichord has perhaps been negatively colored by constant exposure to repair — I've seen the instrument, and their owners, in the most pitiful states of helplessness."

The results of those experiences are to be found in *The Modern Harpsichord*, an informative, daring and entertaining book that is a "must" for anyone thinking of buying or building a harpsichord and a revelation for anyone who already owns one.

HLH



This photograph illustrates two typical pages from *The Modern Harpsichord*. The upper left-hand photograph is an excellent view of the framing of a large Herz harpsichord with 16' choir. The next photograph shows the Herz keyboard coupler. The large photograph shows Anthony Newman at a Herz pedal harpsichord. The Venetian Swell on the pedal instrument is shown in the open position. The right hand page shows the Herz lam-pedal instrument is shown in the open position. The caption brings your attention to the metal plates on the fore-edge of inated pinblock. The caption brings your attention to the metal plates on the fore-edge of the pin block which will receive struts connecting belly rail to pinblock. The last two photographs illustrate the Herz delrin jack with moulded attached spring, removable delrin tongue, plectrum, steel adjustment screw and end pin.

The Harpsichord — 9

Tschudi, or as I prefer to spell his name, Shudi, was in my opinion the most progressive, imaginative, inventive and practical harpsichord builder of the entire 18th century. He introduced and used the basic principles of mass production long before Eli Whitney thought of them. He was in competition with the best builders of his day and his success can be measured by the fact that he built instruments for Frederick the Great, Empress Maria Theresa, Handel, Queen Charlotte and many other important and wealthy people.

Although Shudi's instruments were all custom built to individual demands both in specification and decoration in case design, etc., they retained primarily the same structural details and basic scalings he developed early in his career. The Grand Harpsichords (illustrated here both with photographs and drawings) represent, to my mind, the finest of Shudi.

The Shudi tone and timbre is more masculine and "boomy" than any other harpsichord in existence, especially in the bass. The trebles are more even in proportion than any other English make. On this particular point, one must take into consideration that our modern tolerance in harmonic and noise level has become highly distorted because of our increasingly noisy way of life. Compare the roar of semi-trailer trucks, ear-shattering jack-hammers, steel against steel at construction sites, the blare of TV commercials and the threshold-of-pain volume of rock and roll bands with the restful quiet of the 18th century when the loudest noise conceivable was the somewhat pleasant bass boom of a cannon echoing over a pastoral countryside. Sensitivities to nuance and shading were more important to good instrumental performance back then and practically all of the mechanical weak points were overcome in a most effective manner. Audiences were smaller then, which of course meant smaller concert halls. And these halls were made of wood opposed to our "cathedrals of sound" which are jammed with the

latest in sophisticated electronic amplification. Even so, Schudi tone is powerful, resonant and has a great beauty that can only be described as absolutely superb!

Shudi was born of a noble family belonging to Glarus in Switzerland on March 13, 1702. He moved to England in 1718 when he was just 16 years old, as a journeyman joiner. Both he and Kirckman were apprenticed to Tabel as harpsichord builders. According to Raymond Russell, he was on his own by 1729 at which time he would have been 27 years old.

Around 1769 he and John Broadwood formed a partnership and eventually the firm became the house of Broadwood which exists to this day. Broadwood married Shudi's daughter Barbara on January 2, 1769. Barbara died July 8, 1778 after giving birth to James Shudi Broadwood. Later Broadwood remarried. Shudi died at the age of 71 on August 19, 1773.

One of Shudi's important musical inventions was the Venetian Swell. This unique device was patented December 18, 1769. One of Shudi's friends was Snetzler, the talented organ builder and he adapted Shudi's invention to the pipe organ. The Venetian Swell is still an important part of contemporary pipe organs. Shudi's swell was a desperation attempt to compete with the loud and soft effects of the piano which was beginning to come into its own. Some of the photographs in this article clearly illustrate this invention. Kirckman tried to follow suit with the so-called "nags head" swell which was a hinged section of the lid along the ben-side of the harpsichord. This shutter was invented earlier (1712) by Abraham Jordan and was also used by Roger Plenius around 1750.

A questionable legend purports that Shudi was responsible for killing the rising guitar fad that was cutting into his business. It is told that he bought up a stock of cheap guitars and hired people to inundate London with bad music so that young ladies would tire of the guitar and go back to their harpsichords. According to



ARPSICHORD *of* OTE

by Bjarne Dahl



reports, he succeeded.

Of more than 1,155 instruments built by this firm, approximately 50 still exist today and a few of these are in the United States in private collections in Illinois, New York and Massachusetts. Some instruments were lost as late as World War Two. Whether these were stored for protection and never recovered or destroyed by advancing armies will probably never be known. One of several instruments built for Frederick the Great, which was located at Potsdam, disappeared after the Allied capture of Berlin in 1945.

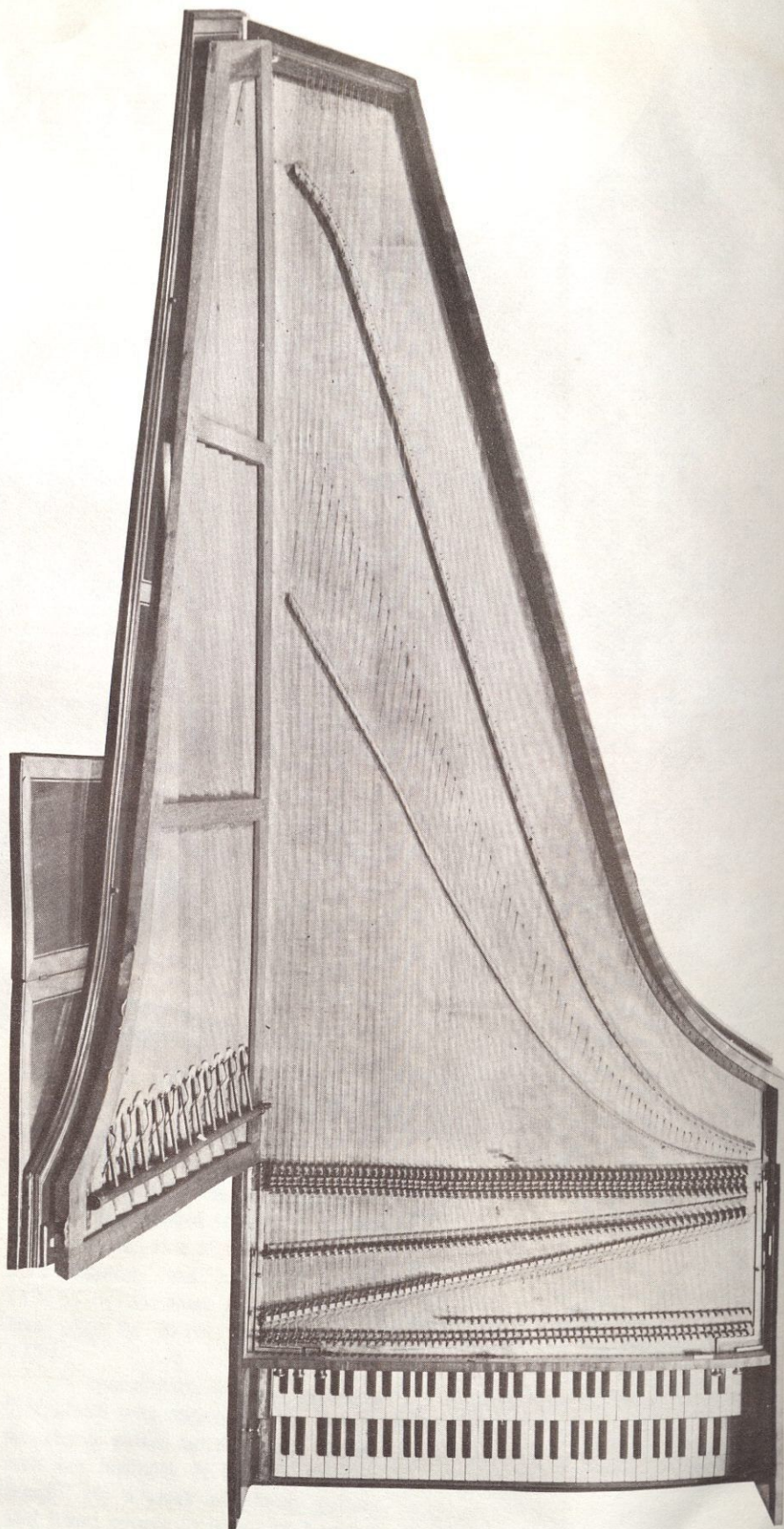
Of the surviving harpsichords, I have taken what I consider three very large and prime examples of his work. All three are basically the same in mechanical specifications and scalings. Two of the instruments are illustrated with photographs and the third, the Fenton House Shudi, I consider important enough to illustrate with drawings which give dimensions. The exteriors of the instruments are almost exactly the same.

THE EMPRESS . . . 1773

The large double-page photograph which heads this article is known as the Empress Harpsichord which was built for the beautiful Empress Maria Theresa of Austria just a year after the first partition of Poland. Maria Theresa was a model wife and mother as well as a popular and kindhearted ruler in whose life music played an important role. During her reign Vienna became a center of the arts and music. Gluck was her court composer and Mozart played before her as a child. Among her 16 children were counted such notables as Emperors Joseph II and Leopold II and Marie Antionette. We know from the diary and account book kept by Barbara Broadwood that this instrument was dispatched on August 20, 1773 which is the day after Shudi died! This is known to be the very last instrument on which the senior Shudi personally worked.

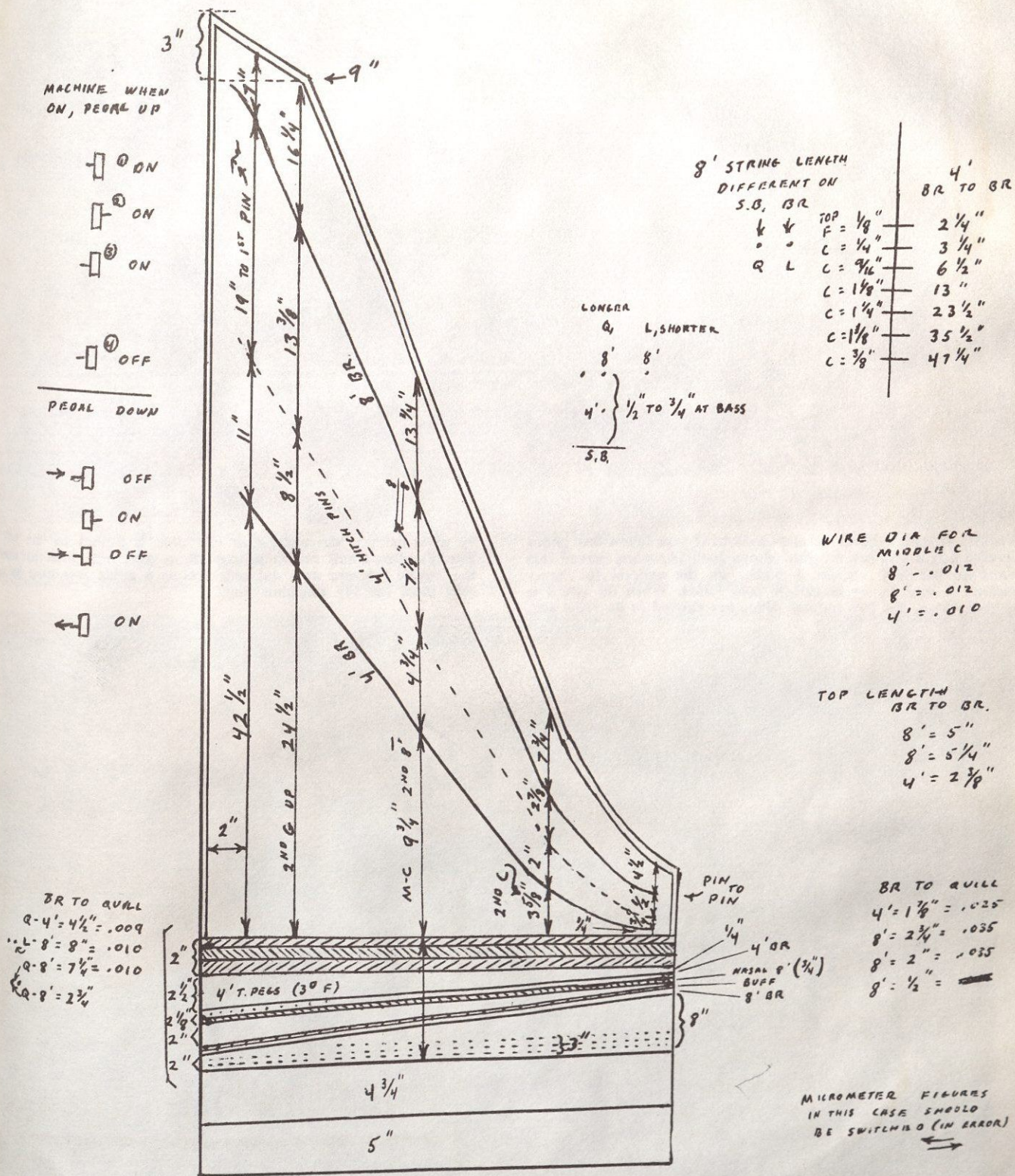
The instrument is now owned by the Brussels Conservatorie who obtained it from a V. Mahillon. For

(Continued on page 15)



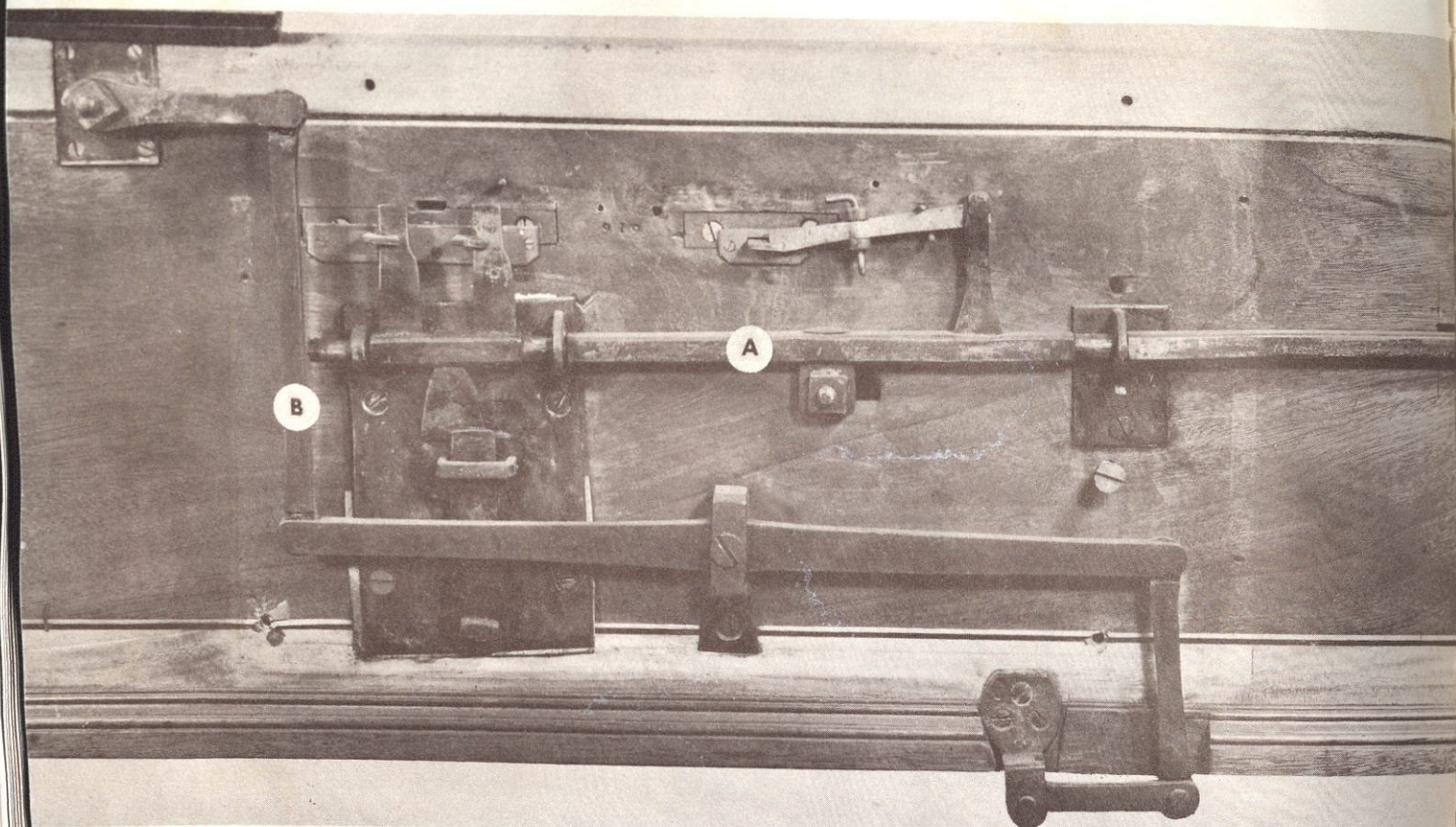
Victoria & Albert Shudi, overhead view. If you examine the name board carefully, you can see the hand stops and follow the rods to the appropriate jack rail or stop in the instrument. The Venetian Swell is folded back in order to see the soundboard. The major part of the swell mechanism is visible on the left.

SCHUDI - BROADWOOD - 1770



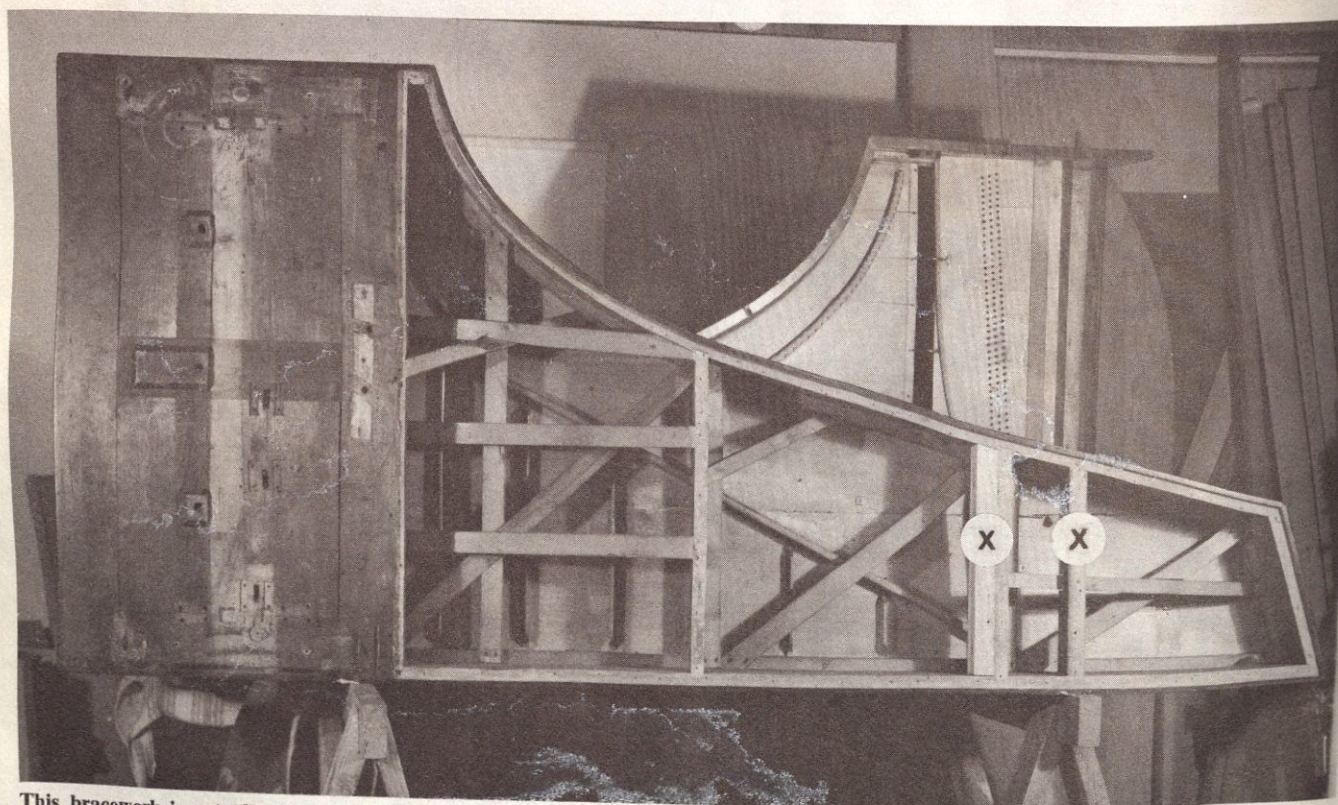
The above is a page from Mr. Dahl's sketchbook showing the measurements of the 1770 Shudi-Broadwood, Fenton House. In his notes he states "switch the micrometer figures on the strings. For example, the bass 4' string is .025 and the treble goes up

to .009 etc." There is also an indication of this error on the lower right side of the drawing. Note the similarity of this instrument and the instrument photographed on the left.



Victoria & Albert Shudi machine action. If you follow this photo carefully, you will see that the "shove bar" (A) when shoved forward (to the left) engages 3 hooks on the ends of the lower manual 4' and upper manual 8' lute slides. When the pedal is pressed down, the two furthest slides are shoved to the right and,

by pivot linkage, the nearest or lute slide is pulled to the left. The Venetian Swell action linkage (B) is also ingenious in that the linkage fulcrum arm not only acts as a guide but also as a stop block for the machine stop.



This bracework is actually from a 1795 Broadwood Piano, however, it rather closely resembles the bracing used in the Shudi

harpsichords. The two braces with the X marks are not original and were added later by an unknown workman.

HARPSICHORD OF NOTE . . .

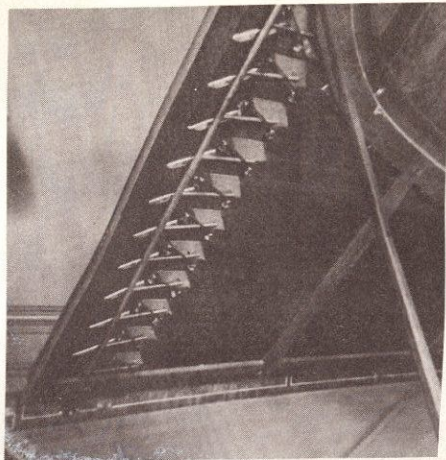
(Continued from page 12)

many years the Austrian government has been trying to get this instrument back as a Royal heirloom, but they have, as yet, been unsuccessful.

THE VICTORIA & ALBERT SHUDI — 1782

Although this instrument was built after Shudi's death, his work was carried on by his son and I believe this harpsichord to be a remarkable extension of most of Shudi's theories and ideas. It also has a well preserved machine action which is illustrated in the accompanying photograph.

The construction and basic design are identical with the Fenton House Shudi which I will describe in detail later on in this article. There are some differences with regard to plucking points as old Broadwood decided to seek scientific advice from a Dr. Gray who advocated equalizing the tension throughout the scale. This instrument bears witness to this ex-



The Fenton-House Shudi Venetian Swell is shown in its open position. The "blinds" do not use return springs, but return by gravity. The number of positions is unlimited from fully opened to fully closed.

periment. Regardless, it is a superior specimen. It was originally in the possession of the Wrottesley family and eventually became part of the collection owned by the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was shown at the International Inventions Expo of 1885. When I saw this instrument in 1957, it was not in playing condition. I now understand that since then, Mr. John

Barnes has brought it back into good order.

The machine stop is an interesting device which eliminates stop shifting and, when engaged, enables the full instrument to be played on the first manual. (English harpsichords generally did not have keyboard coupling action.) When the machine pedal is pressed down, only 2—8's remain. One on the lower manual and one lute on the upper manual. When the pedal is released, all slides engage, except the so-called "English Lute." The Venetian Swell action linkage is also ingenious in that the linkage fulcrum arm guide between the fulcrum and the far end has a sliding guide that not only acts as a guide but also as a stop back for the machine. I think this is quite clever and demonstrates good engineering. The swell also has a unique universal joint so that raising the swell frame will not affect the swell shutter action. The shutter action is merely a comb bar to raise the shutters which are not spring loaded but depend on gravity for closing the return.



The Venetian Swell is shown here in its normal position, with the blinds or louvers opened fully. The keyboard surround is

typical of Shudi's craftsmanship and design. The knob for the right hand-stop is missing.

THE FENTON HOUSE
SHUDI — 1770

In 1934 Major Benton Fletcher gave an instrument collection to the National Trust in London. At that time he stipulated that his antique instruments were to be kept permanently in playing order and maintained for scholarly use and enjoyment by qualified students and musicians. Major Fletcher died in 1944 and his wishes have been studiously fulfilled.

The specimen I describe here is the largest of all the surviving Shudi harpsichords. It has all his innovations and inventions and represents his greatest work. It is in excellent condition. The former owners were Dr. David Hartley, W. Dale, and Gerald Cooper. Major Fletcher purchased this instrument from Mr. Cooper at

Puttick & Simpsons, February 20, 1936 and was subsequently added to the collection.

There are two keyboards of compass CC-f-3 ivory naturals and ebony sharps. It contains five hand-stops and three pedals. Russell claims that the center pedal is modern, however, I sincerely doubt this on the basis that the entire stand is original.

The 6 hand stops from left to right are as follows; (1) Machine stop, for use with the left, (2) Lute or Nasal Upper Manual, (3) 4', (4) Lower manual 8' buff also controlled by center pedal, (5) Upper Manual 8', (6) Lower Manual 8'. The three pedals are from Left to Right, Machine, Harp or Buff and the Swell pedal to the right.

The soundboard is a reddish spruce and in perfect condition. The

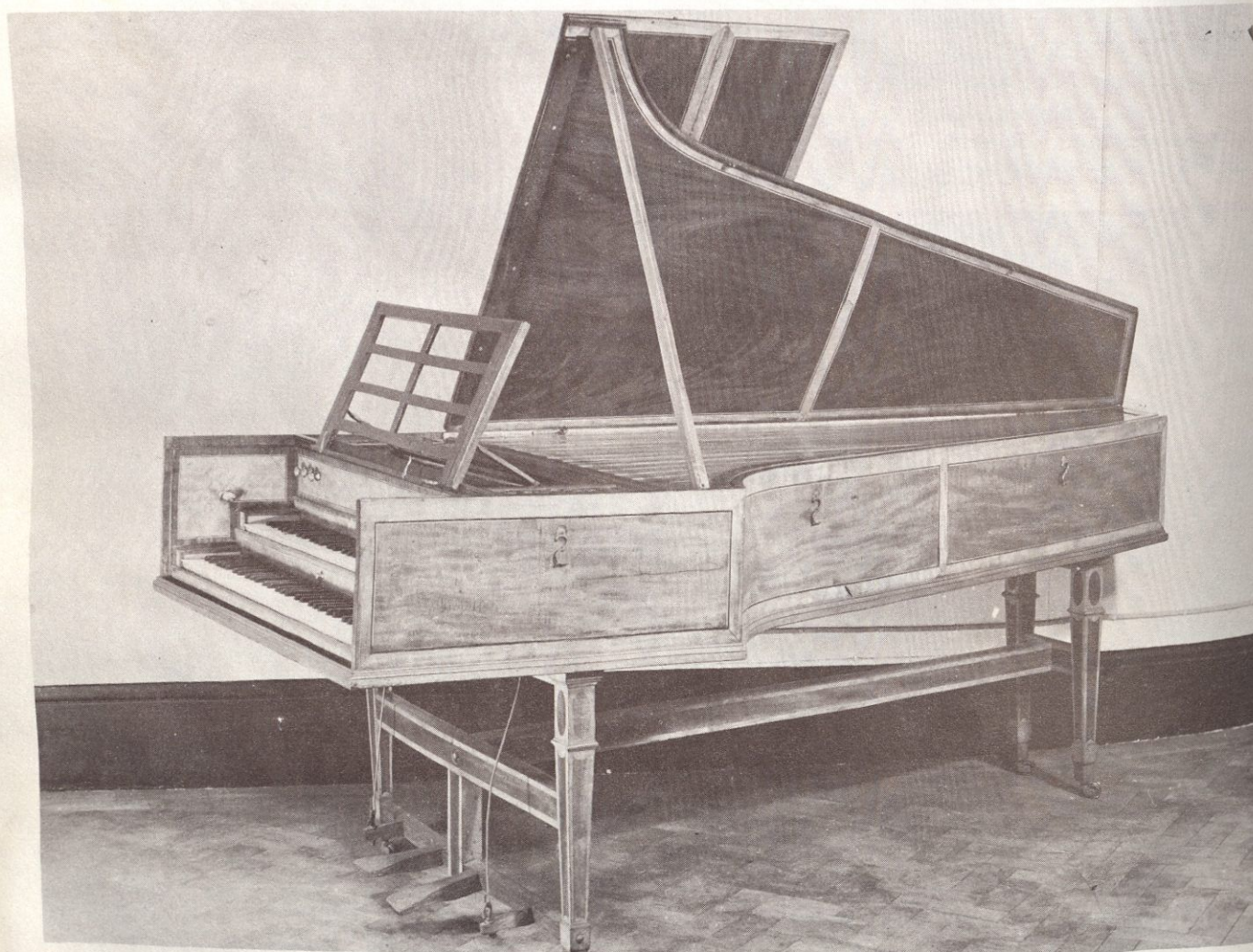
4' jack row is furthest from the keyboard. The plectra is goose quill throughout except for the lower manual 8' which is of leather.

One unusual feature is that the spine side of the instrument is veneered so that the instrument can stand in the center of a room or stage.

The jacks of the upper 8' are dog-legged for use on both manuals. The Lute, which attacks the upper 8' strings can only be played from the upper manual. The Harp or Buff damps the lower 8' set of strings.

The accompanying photographs and drawings readily illustrate the work of a builder I believe was the most progressive and inventive builder of the entire 18th century. We can still learn much from this genius of a man.

Bjarne Dahl



The Victoria and Albert Shudi is shown here with the lid up and the Venetian Swell closed. The "S" handles on the near side of

the case are decorative and have been copied by a number of modern harpsichord builders.

COMPOSING FOR THE HARPSICHORD

A dialogue by Robert W. Jones

Part II

Editor's Note:

Robert W. Jones was born in Oak Park, Illinois and started piano lessons at 6 with William Notely Hughes and organ lessons at 11 with Robert Sheehan. He later studied organ with Ernest West, Margaret Whitney Dow, and Keith Holton, oratorio accompaniment, interpretation and conducting with Dr. Edgar Nelson, composition with Wayne R. Bohrnstedt and band arranging with James Jorgenson. His career started as professional organist and teacher in 1960. He later held positions as Professor of Theory, Counterpoint, Form and Analysis at University of Minnesota and in February, 1965 was appointed Ford Foundation Composer-in-Residence to West Hartford Public Schools. He is also organist and senior choirmaster at Elmwood Community Church, West Hartford. He has received four major awards for his compositions and many commissions. His compositions include 11 published choruses, 3 numbers for orchestra, 3 for band, 2 for chamber music, 2 for organ. He is represented by 9 publishers.

This article, concludes the two part series on composition which began in Volume II, no. 4 of The Harpsichord.

Is there a reason that composers are not composing for the clavichord?

From a purely practical point of view, yes: it isn't worth it. From an aesthetic point of view, there is, of course, no more reason than there is for shying away from the harpsichord or any other instrument.

I suppose, if some composer wrote a nicely idiomatic work, or group of short works, of not too great compass or difficulty and put the label, "FOR CLAVICHORD (or harpsichord, or piano)" at the beginning, they might have a chance on the

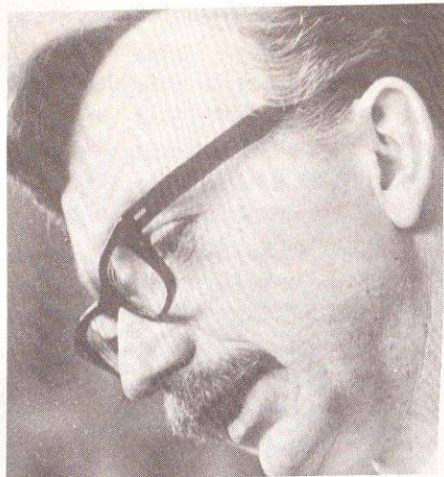


photo by Robert Pugliese

market. That worked in the old days (which are, unfortunately, still with us) when accompaniments for anthems were labeled, FOR ORGAN OR PIANO without even the dignity of a set of parentheses. Of course, the designated two staves of music were usually not too well suited to either instrument, but it sold anthems.

It's time composers gave some thought to going against that old "either/or" designation. The results of putting various weights and importances of feet down are beginning to become noticeable, especially in the field of music for worship. Anthem accompaniments meant for the organ are organistic in idiom, printed on three staves and so labeled. Accompaniments for other types of instruments are clearly designated as such and, thankfully, more diverse instruments are being used accompanimentally in that field.

Right now would be the time to make certain that the "either/or" syndrome doesn't squash contemporary keyboard writing. Write works for harpsichord OR clavichord OR organ OR piano and don't let publication possibilities tack on nomenclatures that are not applicable.

Also, bear in mind that, with a contact mike stuck to its underside or subminiaturized ones on each string, the clavichord may put off its blushes and arise from being our shyest, most reticent voice to join the other pleasing sounds. With electronic amplification, anything's possible.

In composing for the harpsichord, must (or should) the composer consider the difference in sound produced by a French instrument, an English instrument, an Italian instrument, etc?

No. I don't think so. When I write music for the piano, my concern is not whether it will be played on a Steinway, a Bösendorfer or a Yamaha. I realize that variations in thinking, design and resultant shape (even material) caused differences in the sound of various nationalistic harpsichords—minute ones, to my way of thinking. Still, their actions—hence their idioms—were the same. The possession or lack of any given color-changing device or octave level should not cause pangs of thinking-pain, either.

Generally speaking, we're not prone to write today as Edgar Varese did, specifically for the timbre of Georges Barrere's platinum flute. Even in writing for the organ, we're not terribly concerned any more about variations among German Baroque, French Romantic and American Theater organs. Granted, they exist—like the design differences among some harpsichords—and if one thinks long enough, he can imagine some deliciously useable idiosyncracies in each design. But, in the long run, they are all organs and are played in essentially the same manner with the same results—just as the others are all harpsichords with the concomitant samenesses.

Write for the genre; don't be picky about nationalities. Put all your thought into the artistry of creativity and your trust in the artistry of the performer and the music will provide a rewarding experience on any instrument.

Some contemporary composers call for "prepared piano" for their works. Has this practice been adapted for the harpsichord?

Not to my knowledge—and I think it unlikely that, in its present form, it ever will. Remember, I'm speaking of a real harpsichord—not an electronic imitation which would open up new fields of inquiry. The reason is simple: the piano has a

The Harpsichord — 17

diminishing number of strings — three, two and one — per note; the harpsichord has only one.

When John Cage, the eminent American musician and inventor, devised this system of preparation in 1938, he relied on the multiplicity of strings in the piano. This is easily recognizable when one considers that, of the forty-five notes he prepared, only one (the lowest) is a single-strung note.

Screws, bolts, pieces of plastic and rubber are required to be placed between the first and second strings, second and third strings, or both, at designated distances from the dampers. The one single-strung note, a D, must be prepared by positioning a rubber eraser (American Pencil Co. No. 346, no less) over the D, anchoring it under the adjoining C-sharp and E-flat.

If a composer wanted to sacrifice the availability of some strings, he could prepare a few harpsichord notes according to Mr. Cage's principles. Remember, though, that the pieces of rubber place a good deal of tension on the strings and the screws and bolts must be turned down until they touch the soundboard in order to be effective; also, the acoustics of the piano soundboard and piano construction enter into the effect of "preparation." The results might be interesting, but I think it would be more worthwhile if we bent our efforts toward providing some literature for unprepared harpsichords and worried more about preparing the players.

Some people say they don't like the harpsichord because it sounds "out of tune." Do composers use other instruments to mask or soften this "out-of-tuneness" and, if so, which instruments seem to be best at doing this job?

I can't say that I've ever steered clear of using the harpsichord because I think it's out of tune. It may be, for all I know, but then I haven't been blessed — or cursed, which is it? — with hyper-acute hearing or perfect pitch. As a result, I certainly don't hunt out any particular instruments to

act as foils for the harpsichord's weaknesses.

I've heard this thought applied, in varying degrees, to the organ — primarily the 18th Century German-style organ. It doesn't worry me in that case either. I love to write for both these wonderful instruments with whatever combination of strings, winds and/or percussion I can find.

Do you, as a composer, believe a composition calling for a symphony orchestra, pipe organ, choir and one hundred harpsichords could ever be a successful work, or would it primarily be viewed as a curiosity piece?

Gustave Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* calls for one orchestra, with enough extra instruments added to make up another one; not only a pipe organ, but a harmonium, a celeste, a piano, two harps and a cast-bell carillon as well; not one choir, but three, plus half a dozen or more soloists; with enough hardware thrown in to start a store. Still, that masterwork could never be viewed as a curiosity piece. But the reason it is a successful work is not to be found in the sheer tonnage involved in its instrumentation; it is to be found in the consummate artistry with which that vast catalogue of sound is handled. Mahler was (and, unfortunately, still is) accused by his detractors of using too large an orchestra. The fact is, Mahler's genius allowed him to wield those vast forces with the ease and clarity of a chamber ensemble. You can practically count on your fingers and toes the number of measures in a 218-page score in which "everything plays at once."

It is in the hands of a composer's creative genius — not in the size of the tonal aggregation he amasses — to determine the success of a given work.

As far as the work in question is concerned, I would personally hope it would remain hypothetical.

Creatively speaking, one would have to consider the musical material. Would the entire group of harpsichords play the same part? Or would there be a hundred independent parts? Would they all play all of the time,

or in groups of twenty, or so? These decisions would all have to be made before a composer could begin to consider such an ensemble.

I've heard a hundred pianos played at one time and nearly the same number of small, spinet-model organ-type instruments. In neither case was the effect less than distressing. I have no doubt that there could be some very interesting "audio effects" created by each of those ensembles but if that was the goal, present day recording equipment can not handle the results well. I have no recollection of the music played by those ensembles, or the level of artistry of the performers; the only memory I retain is one of wallowing in pure sonic pain.

On the other hand, I've never heard one hundred harpsichords at one time; neither have any of my friends. I wonder if anyone has?

I've watched the preparations necessary for a performance of J. S. Bach's four-harpsichord concerto — the tuning (or is it tempering?) of the four instruments into sympathy with each other took nearly an hour. I would not want to multiply that necessity by twenty-five.

The main reason Mahler's Eighth isn't performed every other week is a purely practical one; the massive collection of talent, time and equipment necessary for its performance is beyond all but a few pocketbooks. I have a feeling the same reasoning might apply to a hundred harpsichords — especially if one is looking for additional space to contain a chorus and orchestra, one which also happens to house an organ. Still — all obstacles surmounted — it is the creative ability of the composer that bears the responsibility for the communication. What Bach did with four instruments (and a little help from Vivaldi) someone might yet accomplish with a hundred. I would certainly be among the curious.

A composer often, if not always, composes things he thinks the public will buy. Do some composers write for the harpsichord simply because

of the uniqueness of the instrument with the hope the publishers and recording companies may buy the work?

Some composers might harbour such an erroneous belief, yes. But, please don't try to out-guess the public and the publishers. No publisher is going to snap up a work just because it includes a supposedly "unique" instrument or sound.

I'll stand corrected if I'm wrong, but I have a strong suspicion that this question and others akin to it were prompted by the recent rise in popularity of the harpsichord, or "harpsichord sound", in TV background scores and hit-tune arrangements. Certainly in those cases, the composers and arrangers are exploiting the tone-color of the instrument rather in the manner of a "fun toy" as one of you has put it — but for very definite reasons!

Neither of these categories of musicians — composers or arrangers — is doing this work "on spec," that is, unsolicited and with the hope that their work *might* go over. These are professionals who use the sound of the harpsichord for its emotional and momentary ear-catching significance. They are men to whom tone-color is almost everything, therefore they are always on the lookout for "new sounds." In background scoring, the emotional qualities of a coloristic device come before truly artistic "compositional" considerations such as formal content. Twenty-odd years ago the sound was made by the Theremin. In the '40's it showed up in motion pictures and its grand nephew, electronic music, is *still* showing up in the movies and on TV as sources of background emotion — usually heebie-jeebies.

Today, it's the harpsichord and the sitar.

If a composer has a definite idea in which the harpsichord figures and without which the idea would not come to fruition, he should use it, by all means, as he would use any of the tone-colors in the spectrum. But the use of it — or any instrument — just because it may be momentarily popu-

lar, or as a method of "reaching" a particular market, borders on artistic dishonesty. Certainly, amplified and filtered through a resonance chamber a harpsichord can have a weirdly exotic sound; if that's what you need, be my guest. Otherside, write simple, straightforward music for people to play at home — that can be quite a task in itself.

Is there a ready market today for new harpsichord compositions?

Yes, but only of a very particular kind. I feel that our composers should bend their efforts, when thinking of the harpsichord, toward groups of short pieces — partitas, dance suites, inventions — playable on a single-manual instrument by performers of moderate capability. Let me break that down.

I say short pieces for two reasons — from the marketing point of view short works cost less to produce and can therefore be sold for less, a not unreasonable desire in the light of the harpsichord's relatively narrow market potential (in relation to the other keyboard instruments). From the performance point of view, the average present-day harpsichord enthusiast wants to be able to work on, and master, a piece in a reasonable length of time — he can do that with a piece that's two pages long in less time than he might take with one of five pages' length. He would much rather master five four-page works than plug away without finished satisfaction on one twenty-page work.

Due to the peculiarly contrapuntal nature of the instrument, inventions — two-part ones, at that — stand highest in my present thoughts. They give the composer practice in the use of the 20th Century harmonic idiom applied to independence. Suites come next because, today, "suite" can mean a grouping of anything the composer wishes. So, go wild — minuet, brawl, aria, polka, blues, bouree, can-can, passamezzo — frug even, or frugue if you're a purist.

They should be written for performance on a single-manual instrument as the least common denomi-

nator (in the best sense of the idea) among the many designs of instruments. If they are of artistic worth and musical value, the owner of the large, complex instrument will not overlook them as being trivial.

The average harpsichord enthusiast is not a towering virtuoso, so he is not going to break himself up over a two-part invention that only an octopus could play. Unfortunately, it is only too easy to write such a work; it is *not* easy to show the restraint necessary to the creation of a work of musical merit that will bring joy in the working-out, and playing to a person for whom music is a pleasant relaxation and not a business.

Through it all, the composer has two obligations — to himself and the expression of what is in him through the idioms of our time, and to the persons who will endeavor to interpret his music for their own pleasure and the pleasure of others. Don't ever write just "for the market." Write for *people* and, after you've proved your worth, the market will come to you.

This ends my answers to the questions sent to me by *The Harpsichord*. In conclusion, I want to stress a few important beliefs . . .

Let the composer be serialistic, totally organized, totally disorganized, slightly adventurous, middle-of-the-road or reactionary; as long as he is *serious* in his intent it is his duty to investigate the harpsichord.

He must learn its intricacies, its foibles, its expressiveness and its capabilities both as a solo and as an ensemble instrument. It should be approached neither as a toy nor as a curiosity, but rather as a bonafide voice in the wide vista of expression we call Late Twentieth Century creativity.

Whether in the home, the concert hall, the theater or the house of worship, the harpsichord has never been picky. It has served them all in the past and is well on the way to doing so again. All it needs is the music.

Robert W. Jones
Resident Composer
West Hartford Schools
The Harpsichord — 19

LETTERS

Dear Mr. Haney:

Many thanks for your letter and the most recent issue of *The Harpsichord*. It did arrive, though it does take a little time between Denver and this remote spot.

I am enclosing the Who's Who sheet. I hope my suggestion under item 17 may be useful, but I am sure many other aficionados are as infuriated as I have been by 'doctored' editions. If one lived in Europe, or the States, and had good library facilities at one's disposal, that handicap would not be too great. But if one spends most of one's life in remote regions of the world, the difficulties are compounded.

My suggestion was partly prompted from having played a good deal of Rameau, and having recently heard a record of George Malcolm's — and while I could not compare my playing to his, there was equally no comparison between the score I have, and the one he was using!

I suggest that in view of the existence of many unreliable, 'edited' editions of 17th and 18th century music, the Society could perform a most useful service in establishing, over a period of time, a bibliography of recommended, scholarly editions of standard harpsichord music. (The case of the Longo and Kirkpatrick editions of Scarlatti is a blatant example!)

Viktor Furst
Zomba, Malawi
Africa

MOVING?

A change of address card must be on file at *The Harpsichord* office in order to receive missed issues, due to address change, without cost. Our address has changed too. Be sure to send all communications to International Harpsichord Society, P. O. Box 4323, Denver, Colorado 80204.

REVIEW

Since this issue is the first issue of our Volume III, we thought you might be interested in learning a little bit about just some of the article which are waiting to appear in issues to come

Dr. George Sargent, Professor of Music, University of Pittsburgh, tells how to "Start with a Repertoire of One." This 2,600 word article shows, step by step, how the beginner can prepare to play before friends and the public. Unique practice schedules are presented and 4 musical examples are given.

Victor Wolfram, Professor of Music, Oklahoma State University, gives us a 3,100 word peek into the "Diary of a Traveling Harpsichordist." It includes revealing visits with harpsichordists Robert Conant and Gustav Leonhardt as well as builder William Dowd. This is Mr. Wolfram's first American tour as a harpsichordist (he is best known for his piano recordings and tours.)

This is followed by a 2,000 word article by harpsichordist Shirley Mathews who takes us on her second recital tour through Europe. This is one of the most informative and entertaining pieces we've read in some time. She visits with harpsichordists W. Christian Schroeder in Munich and Miles Morgan in Rome as well as builders Klaus Ahrens in Leer, Germany and Knud Kauffman in Brussels. She found the William Dowd harpsichord No. 1 in a small chapel in Rome!

One of our biggest features is a step-by-step article on building an Italian Harpsichord. Written by Dr. James R. Scroggs (Bridgewater State College, Mass.) it is illustrated with beautiful drawings made especially for *The Harpsichord* which covers many full pages. The 3,400 words are easy to follow. A satisfying project.

Electronic Tuners . . . are they the answer to our tuning problems? Learn how they work, how much they cost and what's new in the field.

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WANT TO SELL? I need a good harpsichord, one or two manual, mass-produced or one-of-a-kind instrument. Carefully finished kit acceptable. Send specifications, price and (if possible) photograph; Philip Alderman, 1405 West Kirby, Apartment No. 8, Champaign, Illinois, 61820. Will answer all respondents.

INSTRUMENTS: FOR SALE

HARPSICHORDS, CLAVICHORDS — Excellent modern German instruments by Sperrhake. Beautiful cabinetry, moderate prices. Robert S. Taylor, 8710 Garfield Street, Bethesda, Maryland 20034.

HARPSICHORD, EARLY PIANOFORTE Restoration, Repairs. Agent for various new, used Harpsichords. Bjarne B. Dahl, 1095 Valley Forge Drive, Sunnyvale, Calif. 94087.

JOHN MORLEY English Classical Harpsichords. Clavichords. Quick delivery. Safe shipment. Free catalogue. Write 4 Belmont Hill, London, S.E. 13, England.

HAAS CLAVICHORDS — single or double strung with 63 note FF to G³ range. Prices from \$450 to \$600. 6797 Soquel Drive, Aptos, California 95003.

ANTIQUE HARPSICHORDS, large Venetian, in double case, also Italian chambre organs. Michael Thomas, Hurley Manor, Hurley, Berks, England.

HARPSICHORDS/CLAVICHORDS — Neupert, Sassmann, Wittmayer. Catalogue. Clavis Imports, P. O. Box 593, Bellaire, Texas 77401.

HARPSICHORDS CUSTOM BUILT. Antique instruments. John Paul, Parkway, Waldron, Sussex, England.

NEUPERT HARPSICHORDS, CLAVICHORDS. Old, est, finest. Free catalogue. MAGNAMUSIC, Sharon, Connecticut 06069.

SASSMANN HARPSICHORDS. Traditional Kastenbau Construction. Meticulous Craftsmanship. Gregoire Harpsichord Shop, Charlemont, Mass. 01339.

KITS:

VIRGINAL — 4½ octaves, patterned after a 17th century Italian instrument, \$1300. Also available in kit form from \$345. William Ross, Harpsichord Maker, Rm. 515-H, 791 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass. 02118.

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